

2009 Report on Act 182. Section 11

**An Act Relating to Economic Development
and Workforce Development: Adult
Technical Education; Workforce Education
and Training**

**Report to the House Education and Commerce Committees and
Senate Education, Economic Development and Housing and
General Affairs Committees**

January 15, 2009

Submitted by:



**Lifelong Learning Division
(802) 828-0488**

Act 182, Section 11: An Act Relating to Economic Development and Workforce Development: Adult Technical Education; Workforce Education and Training

The commissioner of education shall:

- (1) Outline and review the current method or methods by which tuition is paid for students enrolled in secondary schools ("secondary students") to attend regional technical center programs.
- (2) Consider and propose potential solutions to any barriers preventing, discouraging, or failing to encourage secondary students to attend regional technical center programs, including scheduling issues, availability of classes outside the traditional school day and academic year, and financial disincentives.
- (3) Outline and review the current method or methods by which the cost of adults entering programs at a regional technical center is funded, both for adults who have a high school diploma and for those who do not.
- (4) Consider and propose potential solutions to any barriers preventing, discouraging, or failing to encourage adults, with and without a high school diploma, to attend regional technical centers, including scheduling issues, availability of classes outside the traditional school day and academic year, and financial disincentives.
- (5) Consider and propose potential financial and other incentives to encourage regional technical centers to offer technical education programs at times other than the traditional school day and academic year and to otherwise make technical education programs more available to secondary students and to adults with and without high school diplomas.
- (6) Consider the positive and negative aspects of including within the definition of "pupil" for purposes of determining a district's average daily membership all adult students with a high school diploma who are attending programs at a regional technical center and consider and propose other methods of subsidizing tuition for these students.
- (b) On or before January 15, 2009, the commissioner shall submit a written report to the senate committee on economic development, housing and general affairs, the house committee on commerce, and the senate and house committees on education detailing the results of the work performed pursuant to this section and all potential methods of addressing the identified issues.

Introduction

The information age, a global economy, new workplace expectations, and the rapid, continuous change of the 21st century are demanding an education transformation. Within this context, Career and Technical Education (CTE) is fast becoming an integral part of education reform discussions nationwide.¹ Today's students need new skills for success in life. Vermont's Secondary and Adult Education system must adapt to this new world. We must transform the focus of our Career and Technical Education programming from occupational skills training to the broader, higher level, and more durable knowledge and skills within a career field. Occupational skill mastery alone can no longer be the CTE goal. Every high school student should have the opportunity to acquire rigorous academic, technical and employability skills. Students must be prepared to enter college or a challenging career in modern workplaces where continuous learning and adaptability are the norm. Transformation efforts as well as initiatives aligned to the reauthorized Federal Carl Perkins Act of 2006 present significant opportunities to strengthen the regional CTE delivery system and support education transformation. However, the true potential for high schools partnering with CTE to transform the learning opportunities for all secondary students and adult learners will require the commitment and support of all the stakeholders in the system. The breadth of career and college options as well as post-secondary career opportunities available to our students will be determined by the scope and success of this transformation.

The legislative report that follows provides the information requested through ACT 182 Section 11 and offers a number of recommendations in support of Vermont secondary and adult students.

¹ National Association of State Boards of Education. *Learning to Work, Working to Learn* (Alexandria, VA:NASBE, 2008)

General Background Information

To provide greater depth for our specific responses to the six areas of interest, it is important to give an overview of the entire funding structures for Career and Technical Education (CTE) in Vermont. There are numerous funding structures for CTE that include state statutes, state appropriations, federal funding requirements and local tuition charges. Below is a list of the various funding structures, followed by actual expenditure information for FY07.

CURRENT FUNDING STRUCTURES

1. **1561c – Tuition Reduction Payments** (*Education Fund monies – FY09 appropriation \$8,035,190*) Thirty-five percent of a base education payment is paid for each FTE student enrollment calculated in the average six-semester FTE enrollment count. These payments are supplemental assistance to reduce tuition charges for sending students to CTE. These funds are subtracted from CTE center cost calculations when establishing their allowable tuition rate and thereby reduces tuition owed by sending districts.
2. **1561b – Partial Tuition Payments by DOE to Technical Centers On Behalf of Sending Districts** (*Education Fund monies – approximately \$20 Million*) Eighty-seven percent of a base education payment is paid for each full time (FTE) student enrollment calculated in the average six-semester FTE enrollment count. These “on behalf” payments are subtracted from the overall education spending payments due to the sending district. “On behalf” payments cannot be subtracted from technical center cost calculations used to establish the allowable tuition rate for the technical center and do not reduce tuition paid by the sending district.
3. **1561d – Extra supplemental assistance Payments** (*Education Fund monies*) A technical center receives these payments WHEN their FTE enrollments are increased by 20 percent or more in the specific year. The payment equals two-thirds of the 35 percent of the base education payment multiplied by the actual FTE enrollment increase. In the second year after a 20-percent increase in enrollment the technical center receives one-third of the 35 percent of the base education payment multiplied by the actual FTE enrollment increase of the prior year. These payments reduce tuition owed by sending districts.
4. **1565 – Salary assistance reimbursements to technical centers** (*Education Fund monies – FY09 \$1,904,065 - except for Adult Services Coordinator which is a General Fund Appropriation – FY09 \$221,480*) These Education Fund payments reduce tuition owed by sending districts.
 - a. Center Director – 50 percent of state average salary/benefits or actual salary/benefits, whichever is less
 - b. Assistant Director – 35 percent of state average salary/benefits or actual salary/benefits, whichever is less (only centers with six-semester FTE enrollment of 150 and at least 30 percent of enrollment is from sending schools are eligible)
 - c. Co-op Teacher – 35 percent of state average salary/benefits or actual salary/benefits, whichever is less
 - d. Adult Services Coordinator – up to 50 percent of state average salary/benefits or actual salary/benefits, whichever is less (adult tech ed costs kept separate from secondary CTE costs) (*General Fund monies*)

- e. Guidance Coordinator – 50 percent of the state average salary/benefits or actual salary/benefits, whichever is less.
- 5. 1563 and SBE Rule 2395 4 – **Transportation Assistance** (*Education Fund*)
Transportation reimbursements to school districts which provide transportation to and from technical education programs operated at the center or at a satellite site; paid at a mileage reimbursement rate based on a typical day for the number of days students are transported; submitted twice a year on November 15 and May 15 (FY09 rate is \$2.18 per mile - \$1,260,000 appropriation). These payments reduce tuition owed by sending districts.
- 6. **Equipment Replacement Fund** – Notwithstanding 1564, DOE requests CTE equipment monies in an *Education Fund* appropriation (FY09 appropriation is \$500,000). Available equipment monies are divided equally among technical centers.
- 7. **4011g** (*Education Fund*) – Requires the commissioner to pay to a school district a percentage (87 percent per FTE) of the base education payment for each resident student for whom the district is paying a technical tuition to a regional technical center but who is not enrolled in the district and therefore not counted in the average daily membership of the district. A special appropriation of approximately \$450,000 is established for this purpose.
- 8. **Federal Perkins Grants** – \$2.8 million awarded annually by federal formula once an approved LEA grant application is filed that demonstrates compliance with federal and state CTE requirements.
- 9. **Program Innovation Grants** (*Education Fund \$310,710 in FY09*) – Awarded annually by competitive application for the purposes of supporting start-up and innovative CTE programs.
- 10. **Local Tuition Payments** – Based on a state-approved CTE tuition rate for each center, local schools are billed by the technical center for the remainder of the tuition rate not covered by other sources and includes the partial “on behalf” payment made by the department. VSA Title 16 § 1552 defines how tuition charges shall reflect actual costs of attendance in technical courses at the technical center divided by the average of FTE enrollments in CTE in the prior three years.

(1) Outline and review the current method or methods by which tuition is paid for students enrolled in secondary schools (“secondary students”) to attend regional technical center programs.

Per VSA Title 16 § 1552, technical centers are entitled to charge a CTE tuition for secondary technical education. This tuition amount shall reflect the actual cost, as defined by State Board rule 2390, of full-time attendance in the technical courses offered by the center. The tuition charge shall be reduced proportionally for pupils enrolled in a part-time program.

Per VSA Title 16 § 1551, “**enrollment in a high school shall not be a precondition** for enrollment in a technical center for a student of any age without a diploma.” Tuition for CTE is charged to a school district for both students enrolled in a high school as well as for persons of any age without a high school diploma who live in the district.²

State Board rule 2373 also allows enrollment of adults with a diploma in any secondary technical education program. Adults with a diploma can have guaranteed enrollment in a secondary technical education program if they pay the full amount of the announced tuition³ OR can enroll on a space available basis if they pay up to 40 percent of the announced tuition (VSA Title 16 § 1553). These adult students with diplomas cannot be billed to the resident school districts and cannot be included in the center’s secondary FTE counts used for calculating allowable tuition charges and tuition reduction payments from the state. State Board rule 2370 defines FTE as “an average of at least 240 minutes per day for a school year in a CTE program of study”- 700 hours per year.

Below is an outline of the methods for determining and collecting secondary technical education tuitions:

Step 1: Prior to the start of the school year, technical centers estimate costs and potential revenues to calculate an announced tuition rate.

This is done to provide sending schools with an estimate of what it will cost them to enroll students in technical education programs at the center in the upcoming school year. This announced tuition is the basis for school billing. Centers calculate this estimate for an announced tuition by projecting costs, revenues and anticipated FTE counts.

Step 2: School Billing for Technical Education.

To determine the costs to be billed to each school district, the announced tuition rate is multiplied by the count of student FTEs enrolled from the school district (both secondary students enrolled at the high school and non-enrolled residents of the district) averaged over the prior six semesters:

Announced tuition X six-semester average FTE technical education enrollments from district.

² VSA Title 16 § 4011g reimburses schools paying CTE tuition for a non-enrolled person 87 percent of the base education payment. CTE students not enrolled in a high school are also included in the FTE count eligible for the 35 percent of a base education payment for tuition reduction.

³ These are often paid by social service agencies.

Step 3: DOE approves a final allowable tuition charge for each technical center after the end of the school year. (Usually completed in November-December)

In accordance with VSA Title 16 § 1552, each technical center files **actual annual costs** data to the Department of Education as defined by rule 2390 of the State Board of Education.⁴

The Department of Education calculates the average FTE enrollments over the prior six semesters for each technical center.

The Department of Education establishes an allowable tuition charge for each technical center by **dividing** the **actual costs** incurred by the center **by the actual average FTE enrollments** over the prior six semesters.⁵

The allowable tuition charge for each center is applied to all sending schools in the technical center region.

Step 4: Reconciliation of CTE bills for each sending school district.

As schools are billed and make CTE tuition payments in advance of the final allowable tuition calculation, reconciliation for over or under payment must occur whenever the discrepancy is in excess of 3 percent.⁶ The necessary credits or debits are applied to the next year's billing.

(2) Consider and propose potential solutions to any barriers preventing, discouraging, or failing to encourage secondary students to attend regional technical center programs, including scheduling issues, availability of classes outside the traditional school day and academic year, and financial disincentives.

There are a number of barriers preventing, discouraging or failing to encourage secondary students to attend regional technical center programs.

1. Only 11th and 12th graders have entitled access to technical education.

VSA Title 16 § 1541a requires sending districts to provide students only in grades 11 and 12 with a genuine opportunity to participate in secondary technical education. State Board rule 2371 extends this to say that sending districts MAY support the admission of 10th-grade students, and that 9th-graders MAY attend technical education only with prior approval of the Commissioner of Education. There are approximately 30,000 high school students in grades 9-12. CTE currently serves approximately 16 percent of this population.

2. Geographic barriers limit access.

Secondary technical education programs largely operate at the regional technical centers. This creates a geographic barrier for students from distant high schools to access CTE. 66 percent of statewide technical education enrollments come from the “host” high schools that house the centers. Individual centers range from 25 – 95 percent.

⁴ State Board rule 2390 requires that school districts maintain **separate revenue and cost records for secondary technical education**. Secondary CTE fiscal records at a technical center must be kept apart from regular secondary school revenues and costs and apart from Adult Technical Education revenues and costs. Costs for programs and services provided by the technical center that are not state approved technical education programs can not be included in CTE cost calculations.

⁵ See appendix for a list of allowable tuition by technical center.

⁶ VSA Title 16 § 836 defines this requirement.

3. **Most high school districts have no authority to plan and direct technical education.**
Governance by the “host” school district discourages sending districts who have no authority to plan and oversee technical education. Sending districts have an opportunity to sit on an advisory board but lack decision making authority that would give them ownership and real opportunity to shape what, where and when technical education programming could occur in their region.
4. **Limited integration of rigorous academics within technical education programming.**
While CTE centers have worked to raise the rigor of skills taught and have strengthened post-secondary connections, many CTE programs offer students limited learning opportunities to acquire rigorous reading, writing, math, science and 21st century work skills. The historical perspective of CTE as an enrollment option for academically low performing students continues to be shared by many stakeholders both inside and outside the education system. Curriculum alignment with high school academic courses being taken by CTE students is weak or non-existent. Pilot projects at some centers/high schools have been successful in fostering integration and collaboration but on the large scale, fragmented silos of academic and technical education programming for secondary students persist.
5. **The current CTE delivery structure makes it difficult for students pursuing a rigorous course of study to enroll in technical education and still meet graduation requirements or college readiness for an associate or baccalaureate program.**
CTE programs operate half-day and full-day schedules, depending on the center, during the regular school day. Most CTE programs are taught by a single teacher and the class runs for the entire half-day or full-day schedule. When required travel time to and from the center is taken into account, many students find it very difficult and often impossible to complete academic requirements and participate in CTE programming. Some technical centers have established their own academic classes to support their enrolled students. Academic students needing to complete a chemistry class, a calculus class, etc., often have severe scheduling limitations that prevent access to CTE. Some centers have experimented with offering secondary technical education beyond the regular K12 school day or year. For example, some offerings were made during the summer or in late afternoon or evening. These pilots, however, are stymied by the limitation that no more than 1 FTE can be counted for any student. These types of alternate schedules only work when the sending district agrees to pay the CTE tuition charge even though the student is likely enrolled full-time in the high school during the day.
6. **School districts have a fiscal disincentive to enroll their students in technical education at a regional CTE center.**
The costs of CTE participation directly reduce monies for the operation of the sending district. Students, with the help of their advisors, choose whether or not to participate in CTE at a regional center. This structure fosters the view of CTE as “elective” programming with excessive cost implications rather than core programming that should be available to all students and accessed by many more than currently enroll.
7. **Student interest in attending a technical center program may be low for many students.**
While improving in later years, there is still a stigma attached to CTE participation. CTE is often seen by students and parents as a course of study only for low-performing

students with a greater interest in working and learning with their hands. This perception is validated when you compare student performance on the NECAP assessments for CTE students and high school students statewide. Only 13 percent of CTE students met the math standards in comparison to 30 percent of students statewide. Only 49 percent of CTE students met the reading standards in comparison to 68 percent of students statewide. And this achievement gap would be even greater if the comparison was between CTE students and non-CTE students, as the CTE scores are now lower than the statewide average. CTE is not seen as a challenging course of study leading to college readiness. In a society that places such value on college, any perceived non-college or non-traditional college track is seen as offering low value. Also, affinity for their own high schools discourages some students from attending CTE. Their friends and routines are set at their own high schools and many do not want to leave to attend “another school”.

Potential Solutions

As evident from the above list of barriers, there is a web of variables that discourage CTE participation – fiscal, cultural, programmatic and structural. There will not be a silver bullet to resolve these barriers. It will require challenging systemic changes – not only at the technical centers but also at high schools. However, there are a variety of actions that would help integrate CTE into the mainstream of secondary education.

1. Revise the academic and technical rigor of CTE programming so the focus is on high-order skills within a career field rather than performance of specific job tasks. Some progress has started on this action.
2. Revise the delivery structure to provide more opportunities for high schools to offer 9th and 10th grade introductory courses leading to 11th and 12th grade CTE programs of study to blend more easily into academic schedules as well as providing alternative schedules outside the traditional school day and year.
3. Revise VSA 16 § 1541a so that all grade 9-12 students have an entitlement to CTE.
4. Revise CTE funding and governance structures so that there is true regional ownership of technical education options and all high schools contribute their fair share to their operation. If every high school contributes to the CTE system, each high school will be more committed to making the system serve their students. Initial proposals for such changes have been drafted several times over the last decade. Several options could easily and quickly be presented at a policy table for discussion and action.
5. Require academic course work to include substantive application projects that integrate with CTE programming. This would advance interdisciplinary instructional approaches and would offer tremendous opportunity for developing 21st century skills such as problem-solving, critical thinking, creativity and innovation, teamwork, using information technology and inquiry to learn and construct meaning and deep understanding. High school academics could be organized around career clusters/pathways and linked to CTE experiences relevant to that cluster.
6. Establish a competency-based graduation requirement with proficiency demonstration through performance assessments so students could earn additional credits through alternative learning paths such as CTE. For example, if students could demonstrate

proficiency in geometry through completing CTE projects in construction they would earn a geometry credit on their transcripts. This frees students to personalize their high school experience and pursue learning in a variety of settings rather than just completing academic courses. This also provides students with greater opportunities to earn college credits while enrolled in high school.

(3) Outline and review the current method or methods by which the cost of adults entering programs at a regional technical center is funded, both for adults who have a high school diploma and for those who do not.

VSA Title 16 § 1522 defines an adult student as “a resident of this state, of any age, who has completed high school and who needs additional technical education”. In other words, an adult person without a high school diploma is treated as a secondary technical education student.

Approximately 4,500 adults enroll in a technical education program each year – most as adult students with a diploma but a small number as secondary students. The vast majority (4,400) of these adults attend short-term evening courses offered at the technical center. A small number of these adults (est. 120) attend full-length secondary technical education programs offered to traditional age students during the day. Adults attending full-length secondary technical education programs during the day split approximately 50/50 with diploma and without diploma.

Adults attending secondary technical education programs pay tuition charges in a variety of ways:

1. When an adult **does not have** a high school diploma, they are eligible to attend secondary technical education and have it **paid for by their school district of residence**. VSA 16 § 4011g authorizes the commissioner to pay to the resident district tuition costs for persons without a diploma not enrolled in school. Adults without a diploma attending a secondary technical education program are charged the allowable tuition fee charged for secondary students.
2. When an adult **WITH** a diploma wishes to enroll in a secondary technical education program, they can enter on a space-available basis and may be charged up to 40 percent of the allowable tuition rate OR they can enter as a guaranteed enrollment and be charged the full allowable tuition rate. Centers vary in what they charge these adult students – some charge nothing and others charge the maximum allowable. In a typical year, usually half the centers do not enroll any adults. Usually three to five centers enroll the majority of adult students in CTE. For example, the Center for Technology in Essex typically enrolls 25-30 adults each year. Tuition fees charged for adults with a diploma are paid in a variety of ways:
 - a. Student pays with own monies.
 - b. A social service agency pays for some students.
 - c. An employer pays for some students.

Adults attending adult technical education programs have a variety of education backgrounds:

- 12 percent lack a high school diploma
- 33 percent have a high school diploma
- 21 percent have a high school diploma and some college courses
- 9 percent have an Associates degree
- 25 percent have a Bachelors degree or higher credential.

Regional CTE centers have been working to strengthen the number of adult programs that provide a more comprehensive skill building sequence of courses and lead to an occupational skills certificate. In FY08, 491 students earned an occupational credential (e.g. LNA; Natural/LP Gas Certification; Industrial Maintenance technician). Many of the adult technical education programs are a single short-term course meeting for 15-30 hours of class time. They serve a community education service for persons wanting to develop a specific skill set that can assist them at work, such as computer expertise in EXCEL, WORD, ACCESS or construction occupations. Adults also enroll in Adult Technical Education (ATE) courses in an area of interest like woodworking, first aid, arts.

Adults attending adult technical education programs are charged a course registration fee, which varies from course to course and from center to center. Each center receives funding from the Department of Education (approx. \$300,000) and also from the Department of Labor (approximately \$450,000). This state funding helps offset the costs of operating these ATE programs and thus helps keep individual registration fees low.

The Department of Education funding is divided into two categories – salary assistance (\$219,265) and program operation (\$78,586). These are General Fund appropriations. The Department of Labor funding is divided equally among the centers to support programming for the unemployed and underemployed.

Students use a variety of methods to pay the actual registration fees:

1. Student pays with own monies.
2. A social service agency pays for some students.
3. An employer pays for some students.

(4) Consider and propose potential solutions to any barriers preventing, discouraging, or failing to encourage adults, with and without a high school diploma, to attend regional technical centers, including scheduling issues, availability of classes outside the traditional school day and academic year, and financial disincentives.

There are a number of barriers that discourage adults from attending regional technical centers. It is often difficult for adults to know what career training they should pursue. Registration costs and scheduling can present a challenge as well. The current system supports only a few direct links between the education and training program and the business labor market.

1. Lack of clear workforce development priorities and actions identified by business and economic stakeholders both regionally and statewide make it difficult for all career training providers to function. It leaves training programs with limited support and guidance in decisions on what types of workforce training programs should be offered that would be supported both by students and the economy. It also leaves adults with confusion on how to invest in their own career development.
2. Limited promotion and advertising of career fields and related training opportunities.
3. Funding support for adult technical education is very limited so programming is very dependent on registration fees. This pushes the system toward courses that can easily recruit paying customers in the community. This results in ATE (as well as other Vermont training providers) serving more of a community education role rather than a workforce development role. If for example, it was clear that Vermont wants to build a

workforce capacity in financial services then ATE programming (and secondary technical education and other workforce training providers) would be better supported to offer such programs and graduates of these programs would be more closely linked to the expanding labor market.

4. The scheduling of technical education programming makes it difficult for adults to attend. If an adult wanted to build skills as an auto mechanic, she would need to attend a secondary technical education program during the day with traditional-age high school students. This is often impossible because of employment or undesirable because she needs to follow a school day/calendar schedule and be in classes with teenagers. If this student already has a diploma, which we know 90 percent of them do, there is also a very high cost that makes it out of reach for most potential students.
5. Limited partnerships between education providers and business leave both in a vacuum. Businesses are frustrated with the lack of available skilled workers. Education is frustrated offering programming that often does not lead to economic benefit for its students.

Potential Solutions

This is a complex problem with both funding and design-based solutions. There are a number of actions that could improve adult participation in technical training and also improve value added results for graduates.

1. Establish and fund Industry Sector Education Centers. The purpose of such centers would be to bring businesses within a sector together in a continuous forum with education providers to define specific training needs and to build a partnership so that industry is much more involved in shaping and supporting training programs and to provide links to the industry for students and education programs. Florida has a great model of how this can impact workforce development in very positive ways at relatively low costs. Florida used their community college as the center and created a Manufacturing Education Center that successfully designed a sequence of education programming across secondary and post-secondary education providers so there was coherence for students – adults and secondary. They also built agreements with industry to guarantee hiring interviews for graduates. The Vermont Department of Education and the Department of Labor in conjunction with the Workforce Development Council are funding initial centers of excellence this year, but state level policy support and funding will be necessary for sustainability.
2. Regional technical centers could select high-need career areas to re-design the content and structure of programming so that delivery could be done with more flexible class schedules and expanded industry experiences/apprenticeships that would encourage both adults and secondary students to participate. Special funding to encourage such pilot programming would increase the likelihood of full implementation. The existing CTE funding mechanism is built on a three-year history of enrollments and makes innovative, new program design and development difficult.
3. Identify several priority career fields where it is in Vermont's interest to encourage adults to expand their skills or enter the field. Establish a fund that an education provider or coalition of providers, including the regional technical centers, could apply for funding to operate such programs and offer them at no cost to students. This would direct education

resources to specific career fields rather than have student interest dictate which programs are offered. It would also provide opportunity to establish required program design characteristics regarding such things as more modular, flexible schedules, expanded use of business internships in a program, educator/business agreements regarding graduate access to career opportunities in the industry, etc.

(5) Consider and propose potential financial and other incentives to encourage regional technical centers to offer technical education programs at times other than the traditional school day and academic year and to otherwise make technical education programs more available to secondary students and to adults with and without high school diplomas.

This is addressed in Section 4 above. In summary, CTE programming should begin to re-design its programming and delivery structure not just so more students will participate but also so there are stronger ties to industry and increased rigor for 21st century workplaces and alignment with Vermont's broader secondary transformation vision. To provide incentive for these changes, there needs to be either special pilot funding for new program development as described above or a revised technical education funding mechanism so the dependence on tuition receipts is removed and programming offered will not be so heavily directed by student interests but also Vermont economic interests and demand.

(6) Consider the positive and negative aspects of including within the definition of “pupil” for purposes of determining a district’s average daily membership all adult students with a high school diploma who are attending programs at a regional technical center and consider and propose other methods of subsidizing tuition for these students.

Adult students without a diploma could be more actively recruited into secondary technical education programs if the secondary CTE programs were designed and delivered on a more modular schedule. Special secondary CTE programs designed more appropriately for adult learners could be funded through the existing secondary CTE funding mechanisms. Done well, this could expand adult participation and could also expand secondary student participation.

If adults with a diploma were to be counted as a “pupil” and included in the ADM under our existing funding mechanism, it would increase the FTE count by about 425-450 and the cost of CTE by approximately 12-15 percent statewide. Estimated costs would be between \$4,500,000 - \$5,500,000 at our current enrollment level and our current program design model. Assuming a modified program design model and increasing enrollments, the costs could easily be two or three times higher in a couple years.

It might be safer to fund some pilot efforts, as described in Section 4 above, to improve both the quality of the programs and the level of adult access to them. This would yield immediate benefits for students, industry, and the technical centers with low risk of unintended consequences to changing the definition of pupil.

Conclusion

Increasing participation in CTE programs for both secondary and adult students is affected by funding mechanisms but also by many other important factors including program design and schedules, links to business and industry, weak integration of academic and technical studies, and limited value added labor market benefits for students. Vermont's Legislature plays a key leadership role in supporting an education transformation that will enable Vermonters to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to function effectively as 21st century workers.